concession of oil and mineral rights in Abyssinia.[6] Sir PercivaTs cable that evening to the *Daily Telegraph* was a source of deep grief and chagrin to his fellow correspondents.

At home, experts on military and naval strategy left their retirement, enforced since 1918, and began business again, mostly demonstrating that Mussolini had undertaken a difficult, if not impossible, task, and that circumstances favoured the Abyssinian side. Others, following their lead, wrote knowingly of the rains which when they came would assuredly prevent Italian military operations; and an illustrated newspaper published Mr. G. D. H. Cole's plan for stopping Mussolini. Haile Selassie[6] became a familiar figure, bearded and cloaked, in white breeches and approximate bowler. There was a Friends of Abyssinia Society, as, later, of Czechoslovakia, Albania, Poland and other disappearing countries. The enlightenment, at any rate latterly, of Haile Selassie's rule was stressed; his determination, to abolish the slave trade in his dominion, admired, and Abyssinia's Christianity discovered by many who had formerly assumed its non-existence. Lake Tsana came into the lives of the more assiduous newspaper readers; and some transient excitement was caused by the publication in the *Ciornale d* Italia* of the confidential Report of an Inter-Departmental Committee, presided over by Sir John Maffey, which had been set up in the spring of 1935 to investigate the extent to which British interests would be affected by the realisation of Italian aims in Abyssinia.[7]

[5] The concession was soon cancelled as a result of pressure from the American State Department. Mr. Rickett's subsequent

movements con-
tinued to arouse journalistic interest for a little while, but this belated attention
proved unproductive.

[6] He was variously designated—by sympathisers, usually as the Emperor;
by those who anticipated, or hoped for, an Italian victory (for instance,
Mr, Garvin), as the Negus or, ironically, as the Lion of Judah. Neutral
commentators kept to Hail6 Selassie, which suited equally a reigning and an
exiled monarch.

[7] The Report's conclusion was that no important British interests were
endangered, with the exception of Lake Tsana, the waters of the Blue Nile,
and certain tribal gracing rights.